

MARCH 9, 2023

Dear Members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee,

My name is Constanza Segovia and I live in Hartford. I'm an organizer with *Hartford Deportation Defense*. Our organization represents 170+ immigrant families and their neighbors in the Hartford area. We are members of the *HUSKY For Immigrants* and the *Recovery For All* coalitions.

**I am testifying in strong support of [HB 6859](#), [SB 1177](#), [SB 1178](#) and [SB 1180](#).** Our organization is committed to fighting for the rights and dignity of workers in Connecticut, specially those who are undocumented, Black, Latine, and excluded from much of the safety net that is available to their US citizen counterparts.

Our members have been on the frontlines of a workers' rights crisis. This committee has a critical role in improving those conditions with the support of these key bills:

As someone who worked full time in the restaurant and landscaping industries while undocumented, I can share how critical it is to enforce that employers provide predictable schedules for shift workers, and that tipped workers get paid the minimum wage and not a subminimum wage that, as you may know, was part of the racist backlash following emancipation— the restaurant industry wanted to hire newly freed Black people without paying them, forcing them to live on tips. This concept was made law, and was successful in excluding a workforce of mostly Black women from the full minimum wage. Today in CT, 70% of tipped workers are women. Many of our members are shift workers and tipped workers, and both relying on unpredictable income through tips and unpredictable schedules prevents them and their families from planning ahead, and paying their bills every month. This has implications in our current housing and eviction crisis, with also having to deal with unpredictable rent and utility increases that benefit landlords and corporations.

Also impacting low income workers is the lack of basic labor standards in the rideshare and delivery app industry. This new industry is widely utilized in our communities and it is time the state regulates it. A study showed that Uber & Lyft are taking 30% of passenger fare from drivers much of the time—we must limit that to 15%. Consumers are of course oblivious of this fact, because there is no transparency on how these companies calculate driver's pay. We must change that. Lastly, this bill makes it so that CT drivers can pick up passengers in neighboring states when they drop someone off there. NY and MA drivers are able to work here, but there is no reciprocity.

Lastly, we were glad to see Paid Sick Days included in the governor's budget but it is critical that there are no limits set on the number of employees. The current limit leaves out domestic workers and workers of small businesses. All workers deserve the peace of mind to be able to take time off when they're sick, and the rest of us will be healthier too. We also need to increase the hours from 40 to 80, and we must include the care of children of any age, as well as their chosen family. It is also critical that the legislation include time to care for a family member who experiences family violence or sexual assault.

**I urge this committee to support workers this session.** CT is the wealthiest state in the country and it should be this legislature's priority to protect and increase the rights of the most marginalized in our workforce, regardless of immigration status. Thank you.

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